

THE BUYERS NETWORK

MAY 2020

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THE BUYERS NETWORK is Published Monthly by the Purchasing Division of the West Virginia Department of Administration to Promote Better Value in Public Purchasing.

New Bike Trail at Twin Falls State Park One of Purchasing Division's Latest Unique Projects

At Twin Falls State Park, people are social distancing but still enjoying nearly 30 miles of hiking trails that cover 4,000 acres and wind their way around old farm sites all over the park. A recent solicitation by the Purchasing Division will add more than two miles of bike trails to the park's offerings. The project was awarded to Steorts Home Design and Construction of Hurricane.

The project includes a state-of-the-art bicycle trail for both beginner and intermediate level cyclists. The trail is required to meet criteria that will allow Twin Falls to host a National Interscholastic Cycling Association bicycle event. It will feature two bridges and an average trail grade of 10% with the occasional 15% grade. The trail's surface must be firm enough to prevent a bicycle tire from sinking more than 1/2 inch into the ground. The route will stick close



The Purchasing Division worked with Twin Falls State Park, which is located in Wyoming County, to procure a bicycle trail for beginner and intermediate level cyclists.

Photo courtesy of Tracy Toler

to terrain features such as boulders, rock outcroppings, and gullies to maintain the aesthetic quality of the terrain.

"Twin Falls already attracts people who love both hiking and history, and the views are hard to beat. We hope this project will introduce its beauty to a whole new group of tourists," said Buyer Supervisor Guy Nisbet.

INSIDE...

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New Business Intelligence Report Identifies Vendors Based on Commodity Codes

In an effort to recruit new vendors into the statewide competitive bid process, the Purchasing Division recently developed a report to allow agencies to expand their reach when soliciting the vendor community for necessary goods and services. The report, developed in conjunction with *wvOASIS*, condenses data gathered through the Purchasing Division's Vendor Registration program and is available to state agencies through the *wvOASIS* Business Intelligence module. The report, WV-FIN-VN-010 (*Vendors by Commodity*), allows state agencies to search *wvOASIS*'s vendor table using United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC) commodity codes describing what vendors

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AGENCY PURCHASING CONFERENCE POSTPONED UNTIL 2021

Purchasing Division Continues Processing of Contracts Despite Disruptions to Day-to-Day Life

Life has been very different for many of us over the last couple of months. Our new normal, at least for some, temporarily involves working from home. For others, it involves homeschooling children while continuing to work in the office full-time.

At the outset of the work-from-home orders, the Office of Technology worked with many of you to ensure proper working technology and access to allow you to continue to do your jobs. Prior to that, the Board of Risk and Insurance Management encouraged the development and maintenance of Continuity of Operations Plans for state agencies.

What we've found over these last few weeks and months is that nothing could have quite prepared us for the drastic change and disruption we would experience to our day-to-day lives. Through it all, I am so proud of my staff members here at the Purchasing Division, who have continued to move contracts big and small through the purchasing process. We continue to receive new requisitions for regular purchases at near normal levels. We continue to accept both paper and electronic bids. We continue to perform and stream bid openings, while posting bids received on our website within one business day. We continue to work with vendors to ensure their registrations are current, and we continue to encumber

contracts.

All of this is no easy feat, especially with many of our state partners in other agencies on varying work schedules. I know that many of you also continue to work hard for your agencies to ensure purchases keep moving. Now is the time that we must work together, have patience, and diligently ensure our solicitations succeed the first time, despite the many limitations we face.

As we continue with our new normal, whatever that may look like for your agencies, I encourage you to review specifications closely for clarity and consistency while taking the time to assess bids received for compliance with requirements, continue to check documentation for accuracy, and make sure all processes and procedures are followed according to law and rule. My staff continues to be available for questions and to provide assistance as needed.

Thank you for maintaining the integrity of the state purchasing process through one of the most notable times in our state, the country, and our world's history.



Proper Documentation on Change Orders Helps Protect Agencies from Conflicts

While practice can make perfect, routine activities can often lead to complacency, and sometimes unintentional consequences. When awarding a contract and working with a vendor, it is important that procurement officers always properly maintain their documentation and files. This is especially important when it comes to change orders.

While a change order can be processed to renew or make other modifications to an existing contract, it is critical that the agency file be properly documented. Without the proper supporting documentation of a change, agencies may not be able to properly handle discrepancies.

"In nearly every case when an agency has a question about a proposed change order, the Purchasing Division starts by pulling the file to see what the documentation says," said Assistant Director Frank Whittaker. "That is always the starting point. If the intent is clearly articulated, vendor understanding and compliance is much easier to achieve. That's why we try to closely review specifications drafted by the agency to ensure they are clear and concisely communicate their intent."

For example, a vendor may agree to a renewal and sign off that the pricing will stay the same. However, a few months down the line, that vendor may attempt to increase its fees. If a procurement officer has properly documented the file with the initial agreement, it will be easy to look at that change order and find where the vendor agreed to the terms. Without that documentation, the issue could become a legal matter and halt all of that vendor's services.

"That's why the Purchasing Division requires a two-party agreement between the agency and the vendor," Whittaker continued. "It is very easy to enforce a change order containing both the agency's and vendor's signature that clearly describes intent and the terms of the contract change."

While it may seem like extra effort to upload supporting documentation with every change order, it ensures the protection of the procurement officer and the soliciting agency. If you are unsure of what you should be documenting, please contact your agency's designated procurement officer or assigned Purchasing Division buyer for clarification.

Hosting Public Bid Openings at a Distance



Beginning in March, the Purchasing Division started streaming its bid openings online. Vendors, agencies and members of the public are able to watch live as the Purchasing Division opens paper responses and reads all bids received electronically. Purchasing Assistant Jessica Riley (left) and Buyer Supervisor Linda Harper (right) are shown processing the bids received and sharing the results through a video conference.

Individuals interested in watching the daily bid openings are encouraged to visit WVPurchasing.gov and click on the "COVID-19" banner at the top of the page. Links for each day's bid opening can be found halfway down the page.

Tell Me More: Training and Certification Important to Professional Growth

During the mandated stay-at-home orders, many procurement officers have taken advantage of the opportunity to devote extra time to training, whether to expand their knowledge, complete their required 10 hours of training required by the Code of State Rules, or pursue Basic or Advanced Certification. Training can help procurement officers achieve success through best practices, education, professional development, research, and innovative procurement strategies.

What began in 2009 as an In-House Training Program has expanded to much more. Through the years, the Purchasing Division has grown its offerings to include online training modules and webinars. The decades-long annual conference also continues to be a staple and has developed into a much sought-after training opportunity for procurement officers statewide. With more than 100 hours of training available annually, the Purchasing Division understands the importance that education plays in creating a purchasing process that is ethical, maintains integrity, and upholds the laws and rules.

Many agencies not only allow their

procurement officers to seek professional growth but encourage and celebrate it. All training offered through the Purchasing Division can be used toward the Purchasing Certification Program. The certification program recognizes state procurement officials who exhibit excellence in procurement procedures within state government. State purchasing is challenging and often complex, and obtaining certification can provide recipients with a better understanding of the entire purchasing process. The program increases the participants' procurement knowledge and strengthens their understanding of the state's purchasing procedures.

All certification applicants must be permanently employed by agencies that fall primarily under the authority of W. Va. Code § 5A-3. Procurement officers from agencies exempt in full or in part from this authority are not eligible to participate, unless 75% or more of their job duties relate to transactions under the Purchasing Division's authority. A description of job duties will now be required as part of the verification form. For the Basic Certification, qualifying candidates

must have attended at least one of the last two Agency Purchasing Conferences and complete 15 hours of classes or learning sessions offered by the Purchasing Division. The Advanced Certification requires attendance at three of the five most recent conferences and 30 hours of training.

Those individuals who have already achieved basic and/or advanced certification must complete requirements every three years in order to maintain certification. Those include:

- Attending one of the next three Agency Purchasing Conferences from the date of certification;
- Attending a minimum of 20 hours of training offered by the Purchasing Division; and
- Submitting a verification for re-certification form that includes the signatures of the recipient's immediate supervisor and agency head.

Procurement officers who have questions about their re-certification progress or are interested in participating in the certification program should contact Courtney Johnson at 304.558.4213 or Courtney.S.Johnson@wv.gov.

Recent Webinar Hosted by Purchasing Division Provides Valuable Training to State-Employed Attorneys

The Purchasing Division offered its second legal seminar on state procurement practices and other government operations on April 30, 2020, with approximately 65 state-employed attorneys from various departments and agencies in attendance via

webinar.

“We were overwhelmed with the interest and attendance at the first legal seminar we conducted in 2018, so we thought it was important to again offer a training that is focused specifically on the legal aspects of the state procurement process,” said Purchasing Director Mike Sheets.

The training, originally intended to take place in person, was moved to a webinar format to assist state-employed attorneys with obtaining CLE (Continuing Legal Education) credits prior to the end of the reporting year. The webinar included presentations by Purchasing Division General Counsel Jimmy Meadows, Department of Administration General Counsel Bob Paulson, House Clerk Steve Harrison, Deputy Attorney General John Gray, and representatives from the Office of Technology and the Ethics Commission. Topics discussed included trends in public procurement, the Freedom of Information Act requirements, Legislative Session procedure overview and the role of the House Clerk, the Attorney General’s role in procurement, and more.

All attorneys who attended this training for its full duration received 5.8 online CLE credits, with 1.2 Ethics credits.



COMMODITY CODES

Continued from Page 1

indicate through registration as their specific areas of business.

UNSPSC codes are used globally to classify nearly anything procurable and is part of the information collected from vendors during the state registration process. Procurement employees are encouraged to search UNSPSC.org for appropriate codes describing their needed commodities and become familiar with classification codes for their agency’s unique needs. With the desired UNSPSC codes, and those gathered during solicitation planning, matching UNSPSC codes with vendor information already in the *wvOASIS* system’s VCUST table gives procurement officers a new layer of effectiveness when seeking competitive responses from the private sector. This data, available to export in spreadsheet format for agencies to analyze, can serve to expand the vendor audience made aware of any bid opportunity, whether procured through the agency-delegated purchasing process or advertised as a solicitation through the *West Virginia Purchasing Bulletin*.

Buyers Network

The Purchasing Division and *wvOASIS* designed the WV-FIN-VN-010 report to cut out the time needed to identify potential vendors. To run the report for a specific commodity code, procurement officers should open **WV-FIN-VN-010** within Business Intelligence and click “Refresh All.” Upon entering the commodity’s eight-digit code and the commodity’s two-digit “segment” number (which is the first two digits of the commodity code), a report will identify all vendors from VCUST who have indicated that they can provide the commodity based on that commodity code or one with a similar code to what your agency is seeking. The resulting commodity report includes vendors’ ordering addresses, an email address for one or more vendor representatives, and phone numbers for the business.

The information generated by this report is dependent on the accuracy of what agencies indicate as the appropriate commodity codes describing state needs and what each vendor provides within their business. With the report’s

data including vendor commodity matches beyond a perfect one-to-one match, but staying within the same commodity family, the report gives agencies access to information that may include vendors with the ability to deliver the goods or services needed, even if they identified a similar, but not exact, commodity code upon registration. To further enhance the benefits of this report, the Purchasing Division highly recommends all agencies encourage their vendors to enter or expand the commodity codes on file with their records in the Vendor Self-Service portal accessed at wvOASIS.gov.

If you have any questions regarding this commodity report or need more information, contact Technical Services Manager Mark Totten at Mark.L.Totten@wv.gov.



Surplus Property's Fixed Asset Coordinators Webinar Educates Many Remotely During Stay-at-Home Orders

Following Gov. Jim Justice's stay-at-home order in mid-March, the Purchasing Division has made many adaptations to its daily operations. One change was the transfer of its annual Fixed Asset Coordinators Training, originally slated to take place in person, to an online setting. While the training was initially scheduled to take place in Building 7 at the Capitol Complex, the change to a webinar did not stop the more than 50 individuals who attended the training remotely via Webex.

The West Virginia State Agency for Surplus Property (WVSASP), which is overseen by the Purchasing Division, is responsible for managing the state's Fixed Assets Program. Each year, agencies are required to submit a certification to the WVSASP stating that the agency has entered all its reportable fixed assets into the wvOASIS Fixed Assets System. To ensure that Fixed Asset Coordinators are aware of best practices and current policies and procedures, the WVSASP and the Purchasing Division developed a training exclusive to those state employees responsible for adding, maintaining, and certifying their agency's fixed assets, as well as retiring property no longer needed by the state agency.

"Since WVSASP's operations rely heavily on assets retired by state agencies, it is very important that we continue to train agency asset coordinators on the maintenance of fixed assets, and subsequently, proper retirement procedures," said Acting As-

sistant Director Samantha Knapp. "The webinar offered in early April was recorded and posted online. Our hope is this will continue to serve as a training resource for agencies in the future."

Following the webinar, an evaluation was sent to attendees. Of those who responded, 94% rated the webinar as excellent or good. One respondent commented, "Considering the situation we all are in, everything today was perfect."

Questions regarding the Fixed Assets Program may be directed to WVSASP's Inventory Management Coordinator Sherry Fewell at 304.356.2424 or Sherry.L.Fewell@wv.gov. A copy of this webinar is available within CourseMill at onlinelearning.wv.gov under the Course ID PUR305E.

WEBINAR REMINDER

MAY 7, 2020 | 10 A.M. TO 11 A.M.

STATE AGENCIES ARE INVITED TO WVSASP'S WEBINAR FOR ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS. REGISTER NOW AT [HTTPS://WVSURPLUS.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://wvsurplus.eventbrite.com).

Fiscal Year 2021 Agency Procurement Designation Forms Deadline Set for June 11th

Designated procurement officers should keep an eye out for the annual Agency Procurement Designation Form for Fiscal Year 2021, which is scheduled to be emailed to all current designees in mid-May. This form is required each fiscal year, in accordance with 148 C.S.R. 1, which states that all purchases be approved by the secretary or head of the spending unit, or a designee, whose name must be filed with the Purchasing Director. The designee is responsible for the procurement function of his or her agency, and all purchases for that spending unit must be processed through that person. Additionally, the designee serves as the liaison between the Purchasing Division and the agency.

The Agency Procurement Designation Form must be completed for each designee, indicating whether the individual will serve as the primary or backup contact for the agency, and must be submitted for all state agencies under the Purchasing Division's authority regardless of whether the designee is expected to change or remain the same from the previous fiscal year. This form must be signed by the agency head prior to submission.

A list of current agency designated procurement officers can be viewed online at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/vrc/agencyli.html.

All designation forms for Fiscal Year 2021 must be received by the Purchasing Division no later than Thursday, June 11, 2020, and should be emailed to Purchasing.Training@wv.gov or faxed to 304.558.6026.

All questions regarding this requirement may be directed to Acting Assistant Purchasing Director Samantha Knapp at 304.558.7022 or Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov.

Buyers Network

THE BUYERS NETWORK

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Current Statewide Contract Update

(As of April 20, 2020)

This page includes a listing of current changes made to statewide contracts issued by the Purchasing Division. Information and dates listed in this **Current Statewide Contract Update** are subject to change. All statewide contracts are available online at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/swc. For more information, please contact the buyer assigned to statewide contracts.

Contract Renewals

Contract	Vendor	Commodity	Effective Date
LIGHT18	WV Electric Supply Co	Light Bulbs & Ballast	05/01/20 -04/30/21
OIL19	Pugh Lubricants	Oils, Lubricants and Grease	06/01/20 -05/31/21

Purchasing Adds Training Modules to CourseMill

The Purchasing Division has made it easier to track viewing of online training modules by moving several modules into CourseMill, the state's learning management system. Among the courses posted in CourseMill are full modules on developing specifications, Requests for Quotations, and agency delegated procedures, as well as mini-modules on the blackout period, stringing, and vendor registration fee exemption codes.

These online training modules were designed for agency procurement officials to review from the convenience of their own offices, and given the current circumstances, have allowed many procurement officers the opportunity to participate in training during the work-from-home mandate. Each full module counts as 30 minutes (i.e. .5 hours) of credit toward the Purchasing Division's Certification Program and 10-hour designee requirement, while the mini-modules count as 15 minutes (i.e. .25 hours) of training credit.

While some modules still need updated prior to moving them into CourseMill, more modules are slated to be added to the Course Catalog in the coming months.

Upon completion of a module in CourseMill, the participant will automatically receive a Certificate of Completion via email. However, when viewing the training modules still maintained on the Purchasing Division's training site, the viewer must print and complete the Certificate of Completion for the specific module. The certificate must be signed by the employee and his or her supervisor and submitted to Purchasing.Training@wv.gov or by fax to 304.558.6026.

To view the online training modules page, visit www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/modules.html or www.on-linelearning.wv.gov.

SWC*56	Liberty Distributors Supply Co	Floor cleaners	05/01/20 -04/30/21
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Miscellaneous Actions

Contract	Vendor	Commodity	Description of Change
LAR16	Shi International	Software Licensing	To extend the contract to October 31, 2020 to align with the state of Maryland's contract
DIGCOP17A	KOMAX LLC	Photocopiers	To replace the page due to product discontinuation

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Below is a list of Purchasing Division buyers assigned to specific state agencies.

BUYER	E-MAIL	PHONE
<i>Supervisors</i>		
Tara Lyle	Tara.L.Lyle@wv.gov	558-2544
Guy Nisbet	Guy.L.Nisbet@wv.gov	558-2596
Linda Harper	Linda.B.Harper@wv.gov	558-0468
<i>Senior Buyers</i>		
Mark Atkins	Mark.A.Atkins@wv.gov	558-2307
Jessica Chambers	Jessica.S.Chambers@wv.gov	558-0246
Josh Hager	Joseph.E.Hageriii@wv.gov	558-8801
Crystal Hustead	Crystal.G.Hustead@wv.gov	558-2402
Brittany Ingraham	Brittany.E.Ingraham@wv.gov	558-2157
Melissa Pettrey	Melissa.K.Pettrey@wv.gov	558-0094
<i>Buyers</i>		
Dusty Smith	Dusty.J.Smith@wv.gov	558-2063
John Estep	John.W.Estep@wv.gov	558-2566

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